

Jim Doyle, Governor
Maj. Gen. Albert Wilkening
The Adjutant General
Ed Gleason, Administrator



Vol. 12, No. 2 March/April 2003

WEM DIGEST

Issues and Events for Wisconsin's Emergency Management Community

Gov. Doyle appoints Homeland Security Council

To lead Wisconsin in the war against terrorism, Governor Jim Doyle created the Governor's Homeland Security Council and named Major General Al Wilkening of the Wisconsin National Guard to serve as the state's Homeland Security Advisor.

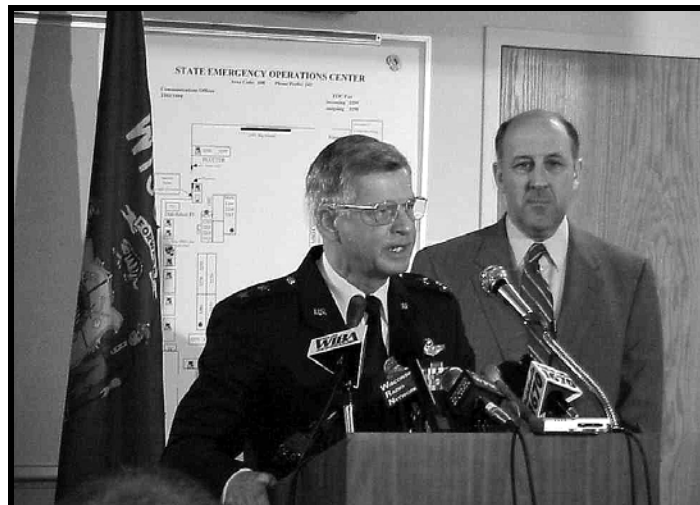
"This is a time for everyone to come together as One Wisconsin," Governor Doyle said. "As Governor, I will be focusing on three things: Supporting our troops, protecting our citizens, and ensuring that the people's business goes on – because we owe it to the men and women going into harms way to take care of the state they leave behind."

The Governor's Homeland Security Council's mission

is to coordinate and direct the state's efforts to prevent and respond to potential attacks in Wisconsin. In addition, the council will make recommendations to the Governor on what additional steps are needed to further enhance the state's homeland security

"At this difficult hour for our state and our country, we must take every step in our power to protect the people of Wisconsin and to support our troops. And we are," Doyle said.

Other members of the council include Ed Gleason, Wisconsin Emergency Management; Jim Warren, Department of Justice; Ken Baldwin, Department of Health and Family Services; Mike Metcalf, Capitol Police; Dave Steingraber



At a press conference on March 20 at the state's Emergency Operations Center, Governor Jim Doyle and Wisconsin Homeland Security Advisor Major General Al Wilkening announced a series of protective measures in the state.

Office of Justice Assistance; and David Collins, Wisconsin State Patrol.

Council members were charged with providing outreach to other state

agencies and organizations not represented on the council and to make sure all questions and concerns regarding homeland security in Wisconsin are addressed.

War and terrorism shadowed state conference

On the eve of the war with Iraq, the increased threat of terrorism and the impending conflict were on the minds of many at the 36th Annual Governor's Conference on Emergency Management.

More than 550 people registered for the annual statewide emergency management conference held March 18-19, 2003 at the Radisson Paper Valley Hotel in Appleton. Featured guest speakers included Ed Bukima of FEMA Region V, Major General Al Wilkening of the Wisconsin National Guard and Governor Jim Doyle.

Governor Doyle told conference participants that equipping and training Wisconsin's first responders remains a high priority. "We have received over \$10 million in equipment grants to date. It is a start, but we need more to support the work of our First Responder community," said Gov. Doyle.

"My hope is that the federal government will continue to provide needed dollars to strengthen our first



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Role of Emergency Management

Emergency Management is about coordination and communication. It is about bringing together all levels of the public safety community to work toward the achievement of a common goal to protect the health and safety of our citizens.

At the state level, Chapter 166 lays out our charge *"To prepare the state and its subdivisions to cope with emergencies resulting from enemy action and natural or man-made disasters..."*. The emergency management system works extremely well, yet to keep it the trusted entity that it has been for the past fifty plus years, we need to ensure we keep it invigorated. Invigoration takes many forms.

One such form is the successful Governor's Conference on Emergency Management that we held last month, clearly our most well attended in recent years and the topical seminars and lectures hopefully helped to sharpen our respective saws. I want to thank all of you who attended and our promise to you is that next year's will be even better.

Invigoration also comes from introspection and reflection. When we do this we need to ask ourselves are we bringing people together, are we making all sides work together, are we being inclusive?

There is a national debate going on that gives me cause for concern. I am reading daily about various segments of the first responder community in our nation stating that they are being overlooked in the distribution of the terrorism preparedness equipment grants and the current system is broke. When I hear this, I wonder how inclusive are we being, how well are we keeping people informed, are we working together to make the emergency management system stronger. We are stronger if we build regional, multi-county capability, yet we cannot overlook the unique challenges of our large urban areas.

There is little doubt that is where the threat primarily lies. We need to redirect the national debate and focus on the common goal. We need to deliver to all levels of our public safety community. Even in Wisconsin, we occasionally hear about communities that are being overlooked. There may be some good reason for being overlooked, but without properly communicating this reason, resentment grows.

Now more than ever, I urge county emergency management directors to keep open those lines of communication. Ensure that all levels of your public safety community are embraced and included in the process. We must work together; failing to do so, makes us collectively less capable.

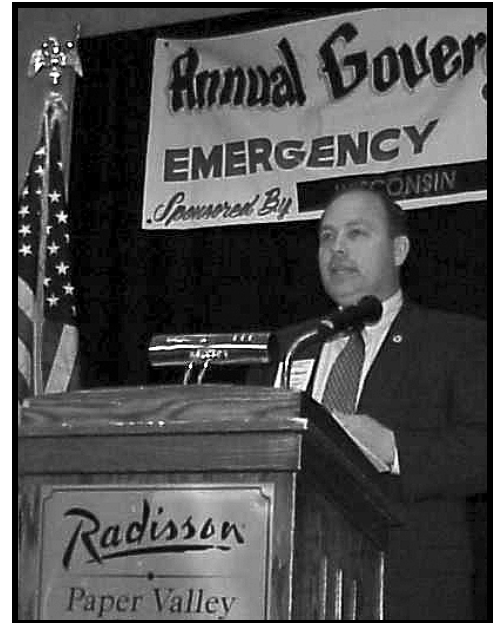
WEM Restructuring

In an unrelated matter, I wanted to announce that Wisconsin Emergency Management, in an effort to be more focused on our customers and efficient in the delivery of our services has restructured itself slightly going from five sections to four. We have changed the names of our bureaus to more properly reflect what we do. We are now comprised of the Bureau of Response and Recovery and the Bureau of Planning and Preparedness. (The Training and Exercise Section is now the Preparedness Section).

This was done for more than the customary reason of reshuffling the deck chairs, but rather to more properly align the responsibilities. Hopefully to you, the change will be transparent, but for us, our goal is to improve the delivery of our services.

Tribute to Fallen Leaders

In closing, I did want to pause and pay tribute to Washington County Sheriff Jack Theusch and Elkhart Lake Fire Chief Edward Weber who both recently passed away unexpectedly.



Wisconsin Emergency Management Administrator Ed Gleason welcomes participants to the 36th Annual Governor's Conference on Emergency Management held March 18-19 in Appleton.

Sheriff Theusch joined the Washington County Sheriff's Department in 1972 and was elected sheriff in 1997. He recently was re-elected to a 4-year term.

Chief Weber started his firefighting career as a volunteer fireman in 1970. He was named fire chief in 1993.

Both men were committed to serving their communities. They will be missed by their families, co-workers, and fellow emergency responders.

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Dry conditions have Wisconsin firefighters worried

By Department of Natural Resources

It has already been a busy spring for firefighters as literally hundreds of grassfires have erupted across the state burning nearly 1,800 acres. Dry conditions have prompted many local and state officials to cancel burning permits.

Arvid Haugen, regional forestry leader for the West Central Region of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), said the lack of snow during last winter is adding to the normal spring fire danger. "Because we did not have significant snowfall that lasted any length of time," he explained, "a lot of the fine fuels are standing upright and more prone to spreading fire rapidly."

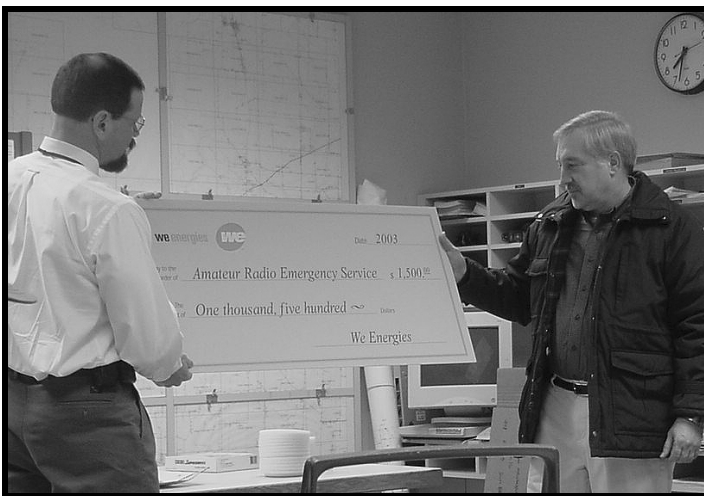
As of April 10, the DNR statewide fire summary listed 369 fires compared to 164 at the same time last year. Haugen said the number of fires has increased sharply and that debris burning is a major cause of the problem.

"With humidity at 14 to 15 percent, any spark easily ignites a wildfire which will spread rapidly with any significant wind," he said.

The DNR has stationed two Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) aircraft at the Necedah airport and one at Black River Falls. In addition, the agency has spotter aircraft on duty to guide fire fighters and pilots.



On March 24, a debris fire that smoldered for a few days touched off a 149-acre blaze four miles east of Siren in Burnett County in northwest Wisconsin. Much of the fuel for the blaze was in the form of downed trees from a tornado that ravaged the area two years ago. Eleven fire departments from Burnett, Polk and Washburn counties, area foresters and St. Croix Tribe firefighters helped contain the fire. Photo courtesy of DNR



A Communications Check

On February 19, WE Energies presented a check for \$1,500 to the Dodge County ARES/RACES. The presentation was part of a larger grant distribution to ARES groups in 17 Wisconsin Counties that WE Energies serves. The funding is to go towards ham radio equipment. From the left are Brian Dobberke of WE Energies and Dale Marks of the Rock River Radio Club in Dodge County. Photo by Molly Soblewski

Citizen Corps Grants Announced

Governor Jim Doyle announced that federal grants totaling \$88,859 have been awarded to 12 local groups for the Citizen Corps Program.

Citizens Corps is a national grassroots initiative designed to encourage public education, training and volunteer opportunities to promote community and family safety. Some of the programs promoted by Citizen Corps include Volunteers in Police Service, Neighborhood Watch, and Community Emergency Response Teams.

Communities and organizations receiving grants are:

- Dodge County Emergency Management, \$2,500
- Grant County Emergency Management, \$900
- Kenosha County Emergency Management, \$10,000
- La Crosse County Emergency Management, \$12,500
- Milwaukee County Emergency Management, \$8,500
- City of Phillips, \$10,000
- Prairie du Chien Police Department, \$2,750
- Racine County Emergency Management, \$11,000
- Sheboygan County Emergency Management, \$2,000
- Washington County Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters, \$12,469
- City of Whitewater Police Department, \$5,000
- Northwest Region Emergency Management, \$11,240

Highlights from the 36th Annual Governor's



Chief Shawn Kelly, Fire Marshall of the Arlington County, Virginia Fire Department discusses the response to the September 11 attack on the Pentagon. Kelly said that updates to their emergency plans for Y2K, were invaluable in regard to the response that included over 1500 emergency responders that worked 24 hours a day.



Governor Doyle greets Clark County Emergency Management Director Janice Brom at the conference.

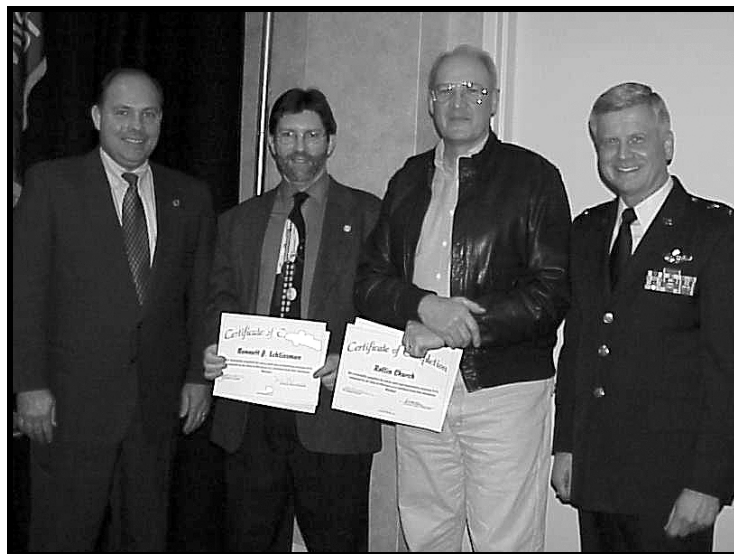
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responders and these grants will continue to come as 100 percent dollars, requiring no state and local match."

Terrorism preparedness was a major focus discussed at the conference. Workshops included a presentation on Bioterrorism, Development of local Citizen Corps programs, terrorism planning, and Wisconsin's new Disaster Assessment Response Team (DART). DART can assist local coroners and medical examiners during a mass fatality response by providing trained personnel and necessary equipment.

Severe weather and responding to natural disasters were also the focus

of several sessions. Meteorologists from the National Weather Service presented an overview of major weather events in 2002 and gave their thoughts for the 2003 storm season.

Wisconsin's Amber Plan, Local Emergency Alert System (EAS) Planning, and Communications Interoperability were some of the workshop topics that focused on emergency communications. The Wisconsin Amber Alert Plan is a partnership between law enforcement and broadcasters to alert the general public through the EAS that a child has been abducted. Organizers hope the system will be operational later this spring.



Job Well Done!

Kenosha County Emergency Management Director Ben Schliesman and Marquette County Emergency Management Director Rollin Church are congratulated for receiving their Level 4 Emergency Manager Certification. To receive certification, they completed 52 hours of independent study course work, 240 hours of classroom activities, 80 hours of study at the Emergency Management Institute in Maryland and passed a written exam. Congratulating Ben and Rollin are WEM Administrator Ed Gleason and Major General Al Wilkening of the Department of Military Affairs.

Conference on Emergency Management



Rusk County and City of Ladysmith officials discussed the response and recovery efforts to the F3 tornado that struck the northwest community on Labor Day 2002. From the left are Rusk County Sheriff Dean Meyer, Ladysmith Police Chief Norm Rozak, WEM Northwest Regional Director Rhonda Reynolds, Rusk County Board Chairman Randy Tatur, and Rusk County Emergency Management Director Jim Turner. Not pictured David Willingham.



Polk County Emergency Management Director Richard Fabbrini and Iron County Emergency Management Director Gary Gotta catch up on the latest news.

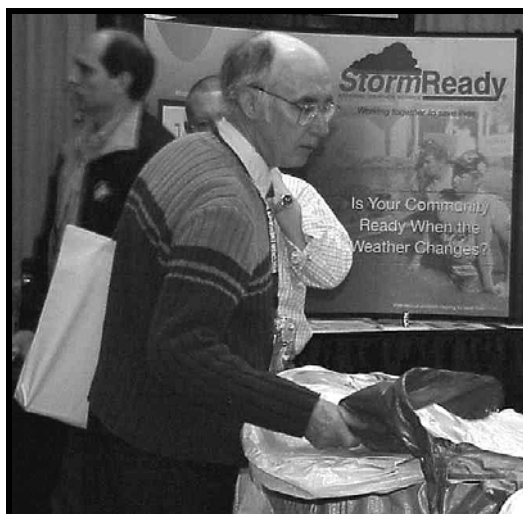


WEM staff Larry Reed, Lois Ristow and Pat Bernhardt assisting with registration.



Where's Diane?

Governor's Conference organizer and WEM staff member Diane Kleiboer was unable to attend this year's conference in person. Although not there, she kept us on track by phone from Madison. WEM Deputy Administrator Al Shanks and WEM Administrator Ed Gleason show off a poster to keep her presence in spirit at this year's conference.



Iowa County Emergency Management Director Ken Palzkill examines some of the equipment displayed by vendors.

WEMA: How to ease the work load

By Hal Swanstrom
WEMA President

Members of Wisconsin Emergency Management Association (WEMA) discussed ways to help deal with some of the many challenges that face local emergency management offices at a meeting in Appleton on March 17.

Prior to the meeting, a survey was sent to local emergency managers to get input on ways to ease the growing job duties in emergency management and to promote the value of the office and its programs.

Many felt that the role of the local emergency management director needs to be recognized as that of a coordinator. Emergency managers work with a variety of response agencies from fire and hazmat, law enforcement, EMS, and public health. The emergency management director not only works with these groups in developing plans but also helps coordinate the multi-agency and multi-government response during an emergency.

Local directors address all four aspects of emergency management: mitigation,

preparedness, planning and response. In the past, the focus was mainly on natural disasters such as floods and tornadoes. Since 9-11, emergency managers have played a major role in terrorism preparedness from conducting threat assessments to managing grants for equipments.

While the job duties continue to grow, our work hours do not. In fact, in some communities, the emergency management director is a half-time position or even less.

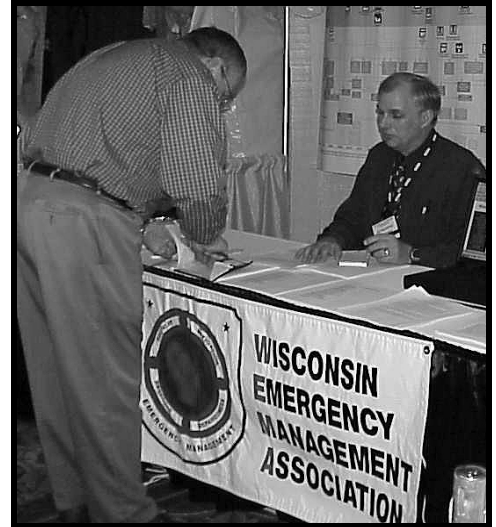
Finding ways to perform the many duties required can be difficult. Some suggestions to improve efficiency include:

- Focus on accomplishing priority items and try to cut back on busy work.
- Planning ahead, list objectives and track projects.
- When appropriate, delegate projects to other agencies and support personnel.
- Limit time on the telephone and

communicate by e-mail to help save time and maintain documentation.

- Develop a web site and keep it current and have FAQ's section.
- File paperwork— must do, should do, wastebasket

Local emergency management program directors also believe it is important that their concerns and views are represented at the state level.



WEMA President Hal Swanstrom works at the WEMA table at the Governor's Conference on Emergency Management.

Regional News

Best Wishes to **Southeast Regional Director Mark Ormsby**. Mark has accepted a position with the U.S. Coast Guard at Marine Safety Office Milwaukee as their homeland security planner.

Carl Stenbol has been named director of **Milwaukee County Emergency Management**. Congratulations!

Bill Breneman has been appointed **Taylor County Emergency Management Director**. Welcome!

Frank Matteo, Director Kenosha County Division of Health, has been named the Deputy Director of **Kenosha County Emergency Management**. Kenosha County officials say this will

strengthen the relationship between health and emergency management.

Sheboygan County Emergency Management Director Meleesa Johnson, Buffalo County Emergency Management Director Monica Herman, and Waushara County Emergency Management Director Gerry Miller have resigned. Best wishes!

Kenosha County Emergency Management sponsored a flu-pandemic table-top exercise at Aurora Hospital on March 13. More than 60 people representing health, emergency response, and volunteer agencies participated.



Welcome!

Mary Brokish has joined WEMA Management as a Grant Specialist. Previously, Mary worked for the Department of Employee Relations.

Get ready for Wisconsin's storm season

With snowstorms and frigid temperatures, it seemed like Wisconsin should have been observing Winter Awareness Week during this year's Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Campaign.

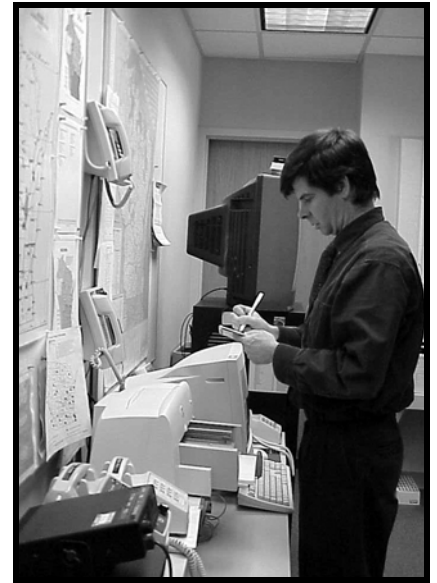
Governor Jim Doyle proclaimed April 7-11, 2003 as the annual severe weather campaign. Despite the winter conditions, many schools, businesses, media outlets and families participated in the scheduled mock tornado drill on April 10.

The annual campaign sponsored by Wisconsin Emergency Management and the National Weather Service, is to remind people of the dangers associated with tornadoes, thunderstorms, flooding and hail and to encourage citizens to take protective safety measures.

On average, Wisconsin experiences about 20 tornadoes a year. Last year, 26 tornadoes touched down in Wisconsin, including the F3 tornado



Rusty Kapela of the National Weather Service in Sullivan (above) and David LaWall of Wisconsin Emergency Management in Madison (right) test the severe warning notification systems during the annual tornado drill on April 10.



that struck Ladysmith in Rusk County on Labor Day.

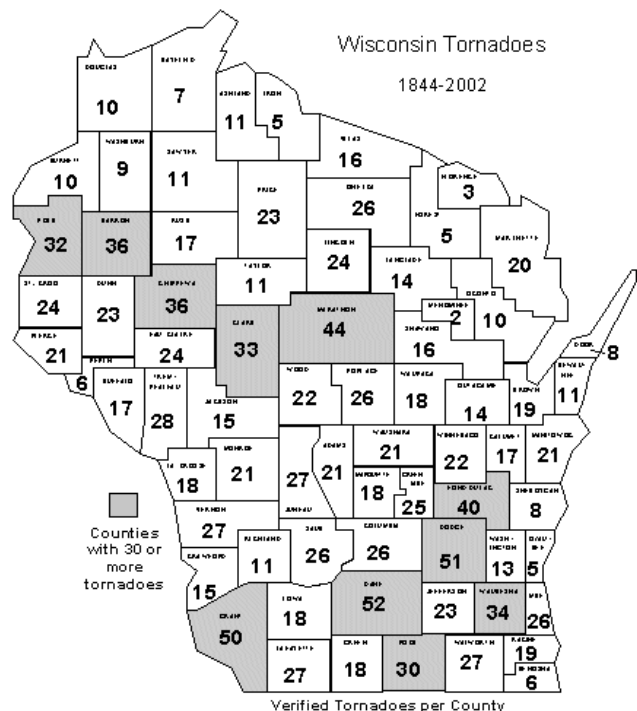
On September 2, 2002, a series of powerful storms moved into Wisconsin producing six tornadoes including the F3 tornado in Ladysmith and an F2

tornado that touched down in Gilman causing major damage to the high school. The F3 tornado in Ladysmith destroyed or damaged dozens of homes. Approximately 40 people were injured as a result of the twisters. There were no fatalities.



Promoting Safety

Taylor County Emergency Management Deputy Director Don Albers gave presentations on tornado/severe weather awareness and safety to area seniors this spring. Don worked with the Taylor County Commission on Aging/Nutrition in setting up the eight visits to area senior nutrition centers. Photo by Don Albers





The Sheriffs of Sauk County

Some of the former sheriffs and current sheriff of Sauk County met for lunch recently. From the left are Dan Hiller, Ralph Hearn, Mike Spencer, Sheriff Randy Stammen, Butch Steinhorst and Al Shanks. In front is Dolly Spencer.

2003 Upcoming Events

**Wisconsin NOAA Weather
Radio Awareness Day
May 15, 2003**

**Wisconsin Heat Awareness Day
June 19, 2003**

**National Lightning Safety
Awareness Week
June 22-28, 2003**

**Amateur Radio Operator Day
June 28, 2003**

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